

# News Release

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## **Oregon Department of Human Services to distribute \$7 million in grants and equipment to support community clean air, cooling and warming shelters ahead of the 2022 wildfire and extreme weather season**

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(Salem) – The Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS), Office of Resilience and Emergency Management is providing \$7 million in grant funds, equipment and other assistance to local governments, public education providers and Tribal Nations to support cleaner air, warming and cooling shelters in communities throughout Oregon.

In 2021 and 2022 the Oregon Legislature passed legislation to support communities' efforts to prepare for the 2022 extreme weather and wildfire seasons:

- Senate Bill 726 of the 2021 Legislative Session provides \$5 million in grant funds and equipment to support cleaner air spaces for emergency purposes, such as when wildfire smoke makes breathing difficult.
- Senate Bill 1536 of the 2022 Legislative Session provides \$2 million to support cooling, warming and cleaner air spaces for when extreme weather or wildfire creates unhealthy conditions for people.

The grant funds awarded may be used for initial program startup costs; the purchase, installation or improvement of air filtration system improvements; the set up or improvement of warming, cooling and cleaner air spaces.

“Many Oregon communities were blanketed with wildfire smoke over the last several years that caused unhealthy conditions for people with breathing problems,” said Ed Flick, director of the ODHS Office of Resilience and Emergency Management. “People living in homes without adequate air filtration and the houseless were unable to escape this unhealthy air. This created unhealthy conditions for many Oregonians. This legislative funding will help provide safe spaces during wildfire smoke events, as well as better support for warming and cooling spaces. This is an important step forward in helping Oregonians during extreme weather events.”

Application for the support is simple, representatives of local governments, public education providers and Tribal Nations just need to notify ODHS of their interest online at <https://arcg.is/v4y4v> and ODHS will contact them as quickly as possible.

More information is available online at <https://www.oregon.gov/dhs/EmergencyManagement/Pages/emergency-shelter.aspx>

### **About the Oregon Department of Human Service's role in emergency management**

Oregon's emergency and recovery plans give the Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) responsibility to support impacted Oregonians during emergencies and recovery, at the request of and in partnership with local and tribal governments. This is in keeping with the agency's primary role to assist people in meeting their basic needs while moving toward independence. ODHS is responsible for supporting the sheltering, feeding, emergency assistance and human services needs of people impacted by disasters. In this role, the ODHS Office of Resilience and Emergency Management coordinates efforts among local and Tribal governments and nongovernmental organizations.

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